

COOPERATIVE PROJECTS BETWEEN COUNTIES AND THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

ALASKA

ISTEA Projects

The Alaska Department of Transportation, the Federal Highways Administration, local government officials and the BLM are working together on several projects under the authority of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, including the White Mountain Gateway, the Steece Highway trail access, and the Dalton and Taylor Highway recreation developments.

The Alaska Visitors Association

The Dalton Highway Advisory Planning Board, Copper Basin officials, the Alaska Land Managers, and local community groups are working with the BLM on the Alaska Visitors Association, an advisory board comprised of a diverse group of business interests to develop and promote tourism.

Cooperative Management

The North Star Borough, the BLM, the Mayor of Fairbanks, and the land and planning staff have cooperative agreements and work closely together. Day-to-day work and monthly meetings have led to completion of a complex land transfer to the borough for a refuge transfer site, in cooperation with the Army. The BLM and the borough co-manage a 1400 acre parcel of government land as an environmental or outdoor education lab, and are working with the school district and the Boy Scouts of America to develop the site further, adding teaching facilities, trails, interpretation, etc..

The Northwest Borough, the BLM, the National Park Service, the FWS, and the State Department of Fish and Game are working to maintain the stability of the Western Arctic Caribou herd through a cooperative project of caribou management. This is the largest herd of animals in the world and is very important as the food supply for 40 villages in Northwest, Alaska.

ARIZONA

Black Hills Back Country Byway

Beginning in 1992, the Safford District worked with Graham and Greenlee Counties and other partners to develop the Black Hills Back Country Byway, a popular scenic drive through the hills east of Safford. The Byway is a 21-mile long county road that takes

visitors through a variety of topography and vegetation, from desert scrub in the lowlands to pinyon-juniper in the mountains. Interesting geologic features; historic sites such as an abandoned mine quarry, the historic Old Safford Bridge across the Gila River, and an old railroad trestle; and prehistoric cultural sites are some of the sites along the way. The byway crosses through the Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area, one of only two RNCAs in the nation, and is used as an access road for rafters floating the Gila Box.

The byway was dedicated on March 19, 1994, Black Hills Festival Day, as proclaimed by the Governor. The celebration lasted an entire weekend. Graham County Chamber of Commerce working closely with the BLM to plan the celebration which included more than 70 booths and day-long entertainment. A dance that night was hosted by the Greenlee County Chamber of Commerce. The awards ceremony was co-hosted by the Graham-Greenlee Board of Realtors.

The Byway was improved and is maintained by road crews from both counties. BLM crews installed cattle guards to replace gated fences to allow travelers to drive from one end to the other without the hassle of opening and closing gates. The Arizona Department of Transportation erected permanent byway signs along the highway and provided flashing warning signs during the dedication. Local communities and businesses also pitched in. During the dedication, Safford provided free trash containers and disposal, while Thatcher loaned its city van as a shuttle vehicle. Businesses donated equipment and services such as trucks for hauling materials, electrical hook-ups, drinking water, and helium for balloons.

Graham County, along with 11 other contributors, helped fund the colorful brochure for the byway that was designed and written by BLM. The brochure was selected as the 1996 Best Interpretive Brochure by the American Recreation Coalition in a national competition. It provides a map of the byway and its many primitive side roads. It also provides a mileage log tied to interesting sights along the route. The brochure uses the byway's *Riches from the Earth* theme to interpret BLM's multiple use mission. A complement to the brochure, the byway audio tape provides a colorful narrative of the byway and its ties to the region's history and resources.

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Mittry Lake

The BLM's Yuma District and Resource Area offices worked with Yuma County to develop a boat launch facility at Mittry Lake, a popular recreation site 12 miles from Yuma, Arizona. The Lake is a shallow marshy waterway with abundant aquatic and riparian vegetation. Approximately 35,000 people visit the lake each year, many of whom are attracted by good fishing opportunities.

The boat launching facility was developed in conjunction with the U.S. Bureau of

Reclamation and the Arizona Game and Fish Department Region IV to improve recreational opportunities, meet public demand, and reduce environmental impacts.

BLM designed the concrete boat ramp, paved ramp ingress and egress, aggregate surface parking lot and vault toilet. The facilities are in conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Yuma County contracted with a local company for construction at the site, using a State Lake Improvement Fund grant.

BLM has assumed maintenance of the facilities. The county maintains the gravel access road to the site. This cooperative effort resolved some long standing concerns about unimproved access, and health and safety issues relating to traffic, trash and waste collection.

Contact:

Support During the Furlough

In 1983, BLM established the unique Long Term Visitor Area (LTVA) program to meet the recreational needs of winter visitors and protect the remaining fragile desert environment. Eight LTVAs currently exist in western Arizona and eastern California. For a nominal fee of \$50, campers can spend seven months in a mild winter climate surrounded by the striking natural beauty of the Sonoran and Mojave deserts, their exotic plants, and unusual wild creatures. This very popular and affordable program provides thousands of visitors each year the opportunity to enjoy the splendor of winter in the desert.

Under a BLM procurement contract, trash is collected twice a week in the LTVAs. During the government shutdown at the beginning of Fiscal Year 1996, the BLM's Yuma District was unable to fund a trash collection contract or operate a water and dump station system at the La Posa Long Term Visitor Area south of Quartzite, Arizona. BLM was unable to fund contracts for lack of an operating budget. For safety and health reasons, essential personnel using government vehicles, collected and dumped trash daily in the La Paz County landfill. La Paz County, by initiative of Supervisor Greg Upton, offered to assist with the trash collection and supported BLM by waiving the landfill fees on 60 loads of refuse. The BLM reimbursed La Paz County approximately \$20 for material not commonly accepted by the landfill.

Contact:

Enhancing Recreation Opportunities

Thanks to interagency cooperation in southeastern Arizona, the public has much easier access to recreation information. The BLM joined forces with the Graham County Chamber of Commerce, Coronado National Forest, Arizona Game and Fish

Department, Arizona State Parks, San Carlos Apache Tribe, and Coronado Resource Conservation and Development to develop an interactive recreation guide for the county. The computer guide features more than 80 recreation sites on federal, state, county, and tribal lands, including information, maps, and photos of each. Computers were placed at the Chamber of Commerce and the BLM's public room.

The guide was so popular that an effort began almost immediately to develop a similar guide for adjoining Greenlee County. That guide, which involved the same partners plus many more, now provides 24-hour-a-day recreation information to the public in kiosks located at the Greenlee County Chamber of Commerce and the Duncan Valley Chamber of Commerce. That information was also added to the BLM's public room computer.

The BLM's Safford Field Office worked with the Graham County Chamber of Commerce and Forest Service to establish an Interagency Visitor Center at the Chamber office. The center, which features the interactive recreation guide, has been very successful, serving about 20,000 visitors each year. In addition to the guide, a large colorful BLM exhibit highlights public lands recreational opportunities in the Gila Valley, and brochures provide more detailed information. The Center also sells field guides and books related to the natural and cultural history of the area.

The BLM and U.S. Forest Service budget money each year to fund a visitor contact specialist at the Chamber. And to ensure that all Chamber employees and volunteers who staff the Center are knowledgeable of the area and better able to answer visitors' questions, the BLM provides field tours to familiarize them with BLM recreation sites. New tours are scheduled as new employees are hired or new recreation site developed. These creative approaches have enabled the BLM to better serve the ever-growing demand for public recreation information.

The BLM and Chamber are also working with other agencies and local businesses to develop new brochures that will be printed using state tourism funds. One of these efforts centers around ecotourism, especially the opportunities to draw birdwatchers to the area. A checklist, brochure, and guide book highlighting local birding hot spots will be developed to entice these ecotourists to travel to the Gila Valley to enjoy the excellent nature-related activities and, in the process, provide an important contribution to the local economy. This is just one more way that the BLM is working with the local communities to promote sustainable uses of the public lands and stimulate the economies of rural communities that serve as the gateway to the public lands.

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ARKANSAS

Cooperative Planning

Planning efforts in Arkansas will be initiated in fiscal year 1997 by the BLM's Jackson District. Because most of the tracts are located in unincorporated areas, county level governments will be a key to assessing local needs and exploring opportunities for collaboration.

CALIFORNIA

The California Biodiversity Council

The California Biodiversity Council is an organization that consists of federal, and state agency representatives and county supervisors and city council members within California who work cooperatively to promote better stewardship of the State's natural resources. The Council is an outgrowth of concern by natural resource managers and locally-elected officials that existing conservation regulations and measures weren't working -- they were too expensive, often duplicative and developed without local involvement, sometimes unrealistic, and simply inadequate to protect California's natural diversity.

The Council was created in September 1991 with the development and signing of the *California Agreement on Biological Diversity*. The Agreement is the most explicit recognition to date, in California as well as the rest of the United States, of the need to coordinate natural resource and land use planning and management activities across jurisdictions to the watershed and regional level. It seeks to effectively involve land owners and users, government agencies and locally-elected leaders in the resolution of issues associated with economic development and resource conservation and develop active partnerships among these interests for managing the State's natural resources. It also seeks to promote the development of conservation and management strategies that reflect the concerns and economic needs of local residents, tailoring conservation programs to these needs for maximum effectiveness. Examples of some of these strategies, such as the San Diego County Partnership Agreement, are described below.

As interest in dealing more comprehensively with issues of habitat loss, economic stability, and water quality has risen across the state, the Biodiversity Council has helped focus these efforts through more effective cooperation between state and federal agencies and local government. Often this is accomplished at Council meetings that are held quarterly in different areas of the state. In conjunction with these meetings, the Council often sponsors Local Biodiversity Forums for community leaders, local residents, and special interest groups to describe, discuss, and begin to resolve issues of local and regional interest or concern. Recently, the Council and representatives of the Regional Council of Rural Counties and the regional county supervisor associations in the Sierra Nevada region, initiated a series of Regional Leadership Forums designed to improve relations between state and federal agencies

and local government. These will be conducted in other areas of the state as requested by regional leaders.

The Council has also been very active in promoting greater coordination among governmental agencies, academic institutes, and other entities for scientific research and data collection and in increasing people's access to this information. *The California Environmental Resources Evaluation System (CERES)* is an example of one such effort. It is an information system designed to facilitate access to a variety of automated data describing California's rich and diverse environments. The Council has also worked with local residents in the Klamath Province, located in the northwestern portion of the state, and the Sierra Nevada to develop geographic information systems (GIS) to assist area residents collect, store and analyze information for watershed restoration work and other planning and conservation efforts.

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The San Diego County Partnership Agreement

The City and County of San Diego and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) are currently involved in several multi-habitat conservation planning efforts. These efforts are designed to protect key habitat areas and wildlife corridors and meet the requirements of the State and Federal Endangered Species Acts in a manner that addresses the land use and economic objectives of the San Diego region. These efforts include: the City of San Diego's Multiple Species Conservation Plan, The County of San Diego's Multiple Habitat/Open Space Program, and SANDAG's North County Multiple Habitat Conservation Plan. Each effort is individually tailored to a specific area, but will be linked together to create a regional habitat conservation strategy.

BLM manages approximately 180,000 acres of land in the area covered by these plans. Roughly 80,000 acres are located in western San Diego County and are included in the BLM's South Coast Resource Management Plan. Another 100,000 acres are located in the eastern portion of the County and are covered under the BLM's Eastern San Diego County Plan, which is part of the California Desert Conservation Area Plan.

Under the auspices of the *California Agreement on Biological Diversity*, the BLM, the City and County of San Diego, SANDAG, the California Department of Fish & Game, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service signed an agreement in July 1994 establishing a partnership to develop a comprehensive strategy incorporating BLM-managed lands within the ongoing conservation planning efforts of the City, County, and SANDAG. As a part of this strategy, the agencies will work collaboratively with

the City, County, and SANDAG to ensure federal, state, regional, and local land management prescriptions are consistent. The signatories of the agreement will also share land use and natural resource data to identify and map key habitat and wildlife corridors.

Habitat and corridors on the BLM lands will be included as part of the region's plans and they will be retained and managed as federal lands by the BLM. These lands may be used as mitigation to allow development of private lands. The BLM will coordinate with the County in acquiring key lands through the Land and Water Conservation Fund, or exchanges where it is in the interest of the United States.

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The Mono County Collaborative Planning Memorandum of Understanding

Mono County is located on the east side of the Sierra Nevada in central California. Approximately 88 percent of the county's 3100 square miles are publicly owned and managed by the BLM and US Forest Service. Motivated by concerns from their constituents regarding the management of the County's public lands, the Mono County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution in June 1995 calling for the development of a formal collaborative process linking state, federal, and county activities together for more effectively resolving land use-related issues.

Working closely with the BLM, the Forest Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, the Lahontan Regional Water Control Board, and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the County developed an MOU establishing a formal collaborative planning process and the Mono County Collaborative Planning Team (MCCPT). The team is currently composed of managers from each of the participating agency's field offices, but other agencies and organizations will be permitted to join as the need arises. The purpose of the MCCPT is to assure that government activities contribute to the long-term maintenance and enhancement of the environment and to the economy and quality of life in the area; to minimize the impact of conflicting regulations and decisions, and to eliminate duplication to the extent possible.

The MOU establishes a process for identifying land use-related issues and concerns, prioritizing the resolution of these issues and concerns, developing, maintaining, and sharing common data bases for analyzing issues, and working collaboratively to resolve them. Collaborative planning will be accomplished through cooperation and early and continuing public involvement, coordinated planning and implementation, and the sharing of information, personnel, equipment, and technology.

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The West Mojave Coordinated Management Program

The West Mojave Coordinated Management Program (WMCMP) is the first major effort resulting from the *California Agreement on Biological Diversity*. The WMCMP was established in 1992 via a Memorandum of Understanding. Under this program, the BLM, the California Department of Fish and Game, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Counties of Inyo, Kern, and San Bernardino, and ten incorporated cities and towns are preparing an interagency plan setting the standard for managing habitat of the desert tortoise and other sensitive species on 9.4 million acres of public and private land.

The plan, adoptable by all the participating agencies and local governments, will define a regional strategy for conserving 93 plant and animal species and their habitats; develop an efficient, equitable and cost-effective process for complying with State and Federal Endangered Species Acts; and provide for appropriate resource use and community expansion. Once completed and adopted by all participating agencies, a framework will be established streamlining the process through which state and federal endangered species permits, and local building permits are issued. The target date for completion of the plan is the end of 1998.

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COLORADO

Yampa Valley Alliance

The Yampa Valley Alliance (YVA) is a group of federal, state and local agencies whose purpose is to cooperatively conserve and enhance current lifestyles through development of recreational assets in northwest Colorado. The BLM's contribution includes development of over 100 miles of the Yampa Valley trail and a number of river recreation access sites on public lands. The Yampa Valley Outdoor Recreation Conceptual Plan published in December 1992 contains recommendations for trails, recreation areas, river resources, natural and cultural resources, and recreational tourism. Implementation is expected to take 5 to 10 years. The Alliance has received several major grants from the Energy Impact Fund and Great Outdoors Colorado to acquire lands and easements and develop recreational trail facilities. As a part of this effort, the Lower Snake Resource Area, BLM, has assisted in the funding and providing work for the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, which is sponsored by the City of Steamboat Springs.

The Yampa River System Project was a major outgrowth of the YVA initiated during fiscal year 1996. Goals of the Project include protecting riparian and agricultural land

along the river, instituting consistent management of 12 existing river access sites by Colorado State Parks (some of which are BLM sites or serve BLM reaches of the Yampa River), preserving public access and open space along the river through conservation easements and leases, aiding in recovery of the Colorado River cutthroat trout, and educating the public about the unique natural and cultural aspects of the Yampa River Valley. The project was successful in competing for grant funding from the Great Outdoors Colorado Legacy Projects in the amount of \$6,000,000. Project sponsors are the City of Steamboat Springs, City of Craig, Routt County, and Moffat County. Project partners include private landowners, business owners, local governments, conservation and recreation organizations, and resource management agencies including BLM.

Contact:

Cedar Mountain

Recreation and interpretive facilities are being cooperatively developed on Cedar Mountain by the BLM, the City of Craig, Moffat County, Moffat County Schools (Craig Middle School Students), the Lions Club, the CDOW, and the Big Country Resource Conservation and Development. Cedar Mountain is a prominent landmark consisting of 880 acres of public lands located within close proximity of the City of Craig. It offers recreational opportunities including hiking, environmental education, picnicking, and mountain biking which are of primary importance to the local community. The Cedar Mountain Management Plan was completed in 1992. During fiscal year 1996, the Lower Snake Resource Area of the BLM worked with Moffat County to hire a contractor to complete a picnic area.

Contact:

Gunnison Sage Grouse Working Group

The Gunnison Sage Grouse Working Group is a local, multi-interest forum representing landowners, Gunnison County, sportsmen, land management agencies, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Gunnison County Cattlemen's Association, and the High Country Citizens Alliance. The common goal of the group is to develop a conservation plan that will lead to a stable and healthy population of sage grouse in the Gunnison Basin of Colorado. The conservation plan will describe management strategies for the Gunnison Basin and establishes a process and puts in place a framework that will guide management efforts aimed at improving sage grouse habitat and reversing the long term decline of the Gunnison Sage Grouse in the Gunnison Basin watershed.

Central to this process is the idea of citizen, community, and agency involvement in determining appropriate management activities designed to meet jointly developed

goals and objectives. Citizens and the community are involved at this time through the working group. The membership has been open-ended and representation from throughout the community has been encouraged. The group has also presented portions of the plan to the community at various points throughout the process. Numerous news articles have been generated to keep the public informed. Two public meetings are planned in June 1997 to present the conservation plan which is undergoing review at this time.

The Gunnison Sage Grouse, a newly described species, is found only in southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah. Sage grouse are large, brown/gray chicken-like birds with conspicuous black and white markings. They are dependent upon sagebrush. The sage grouse may become a candidate species for federal listing as threatened or endangered.

The importance of sage grouse in the Basin and the concern over declining populations has precipitated management activity for several years. The Gunnison Resource Management Plan completed in 1993 had a strong emphasis on sage grouse habitat management, especially riparian areas. Since that plan's completion the BLM has begun implementation of the management that is intended to improve habitat. This has focused to the greatest extent on livestock management. There have been several projects constructed to improve riparian habitat including livestock exclosures and pipe and trough developments. The U.S. Forest Service has also made adjustments in their grazing allotments. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has worked with private land owners and Gunnison County on subdivision issues that effect habitat. They have also made adjustments in the hunting regulations to reduce the harvest.

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San Miguel Watershed Coalition

Various public and private entities which have worked together on issues within the San Miguel Watershed for many years have formally established the San Miguel Watershed Coalition. Their goal was to protect and maintain the high natural values in this watershed in the face of growth and use pressures. Initial efforts focused on the San Miguel River corridor in the upper basin around Telluride. Other efforts occurred throughout the watershed but were not linked. This most recent Coalition of interests emerged one year ago to develop a comprehensive plan for the entire watershed.

The Coalition consists of private citizens who live in the Basin, representatives from town and county governments, federal and state resource management agencies, quasi-governmental entities, and land conservation and environmental groups. All

volunteered to participate as members of the Coalition.

As stewards of some of the world's highest, wildest and most beautiful lands, the San Miguel Watershed Coalition is dedicated to guiding the management of the San Miguel Watershed. The Coalition will develop, through a process of collaborative planning and substantive public involvement, a basinwide management framework which conserves and enhances the natural, cultural and recreational resources and the social and economic vitality communities within the watershed. The Coalition will guide the plan's implementation. Key to the development of this plan, is the active involvement from watershed stakeholders. The Coalition will also provide a forum through which citizens of the watershed can address issues in the future.

The one million acre San Miguel River watershed is located in Montrose and San Miguel Counties in southwest Colorado and encompasses the towns of Telluride, Sawpit, Ophir, Mountain Village, Placerville, Norwood, Naturita, and Nucla. This area includes a BLM Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and three riparian preserves managed by the Nature Conservancy. The 21,000 acre ACEC, along the San Miguel River, boasts some rather rare vegetative associations and is an integral part of one of the few remaining wild rivers in the state.

Major themes that have echoed throughout watershed meetings are: water, natural resources, recreation and commodities, and growth and community preservation.

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Gas and Oil Regulatory Team

The Colorado BLM along with the Colorado Oil and Gas Commission, the Southern Ute Indian Nation, and industry representatives have joined together with La Plata County to form the Gas and Oil Regulatory Team (GORT). The GORT is chartered to deal with gas and oil development issues. Open public meetings are held regularly and the group communicates and coordinates to handle multi-jurisdictional issues as well as provide public information and obtain public feedback. The GORT has been highly involved in the assessment and remediation of potential ground water impacts caused by gas and oil development.

Contact:

Grand Mesa Slopes Management Plan

The Grand Mesa Slope Special Management Area is an 80 square mile of mixed ownership lands lying east of and adjacent to Grand Junction, Colorado. The BLM's Grand Junction Resource Area manages approximately 37% of the lands with the local

communities of Grand Junction and Palisade managing 22%, the Forest Service managing 8%, and the remaining 13% in private ownership. A two year collaborative planning process involving over 30 local entities (including government agencies, municipalities, land owners and public interest groups) developed a Grand Mesa Slopes Management Plan. The primary vision of the plan was one of open space providing long term protection for scenic values, wildlife habitat and critical big game winter range, municipal watersheds, traditional ranching uses and recreation opportunities. Mesa County adopted the Grand Mesa Slopes Management Plan as their vision for the area and have incorporated it into the recently developed Mesa Countywide Land Use Plan.

Contact:

Noxious Weed Management

The Colorado BLM has formed pilot partnerships with Rio Blanco, Moffat, and Jackson counties to control current infestations of noxious weeds and to protect other lands not currently invested. The BLM also has agreements and works with county agents in Chaffee and Montrose counties to control the spread of noxious weeds.

Contact:

FLORIDA

Cooperative Management in Jupiter Inlet, Florida

In Jupiter, Florida, the BLM is developing an Assistance Agreement with Palm Beach County to manage a tract recently returned to the BLM from the US Coast Guard. The tract, which was included on the Palm Beach County's List of Environmentally Sensitive Lands, supports 19 federally or state-listed species, as well as historic resources. Under the agreement, the County will fully fund the initial implementation of the Jupiter Inlet Coordinated Resource Management Plan, which was developed with input from the County, other groups and the public during 1996. The BLM matching funds will contribute to a management trust fund for long-term maintenance of the natural resources by Palm Beach County, including ongoing projects such as prescribed burns and exotic plant removal.

The BLM is benefiting not only through the shared funding of the project, but also by having a local presence on the tract and access to additional expertise in managing this rare fire dependent plant community in an urban setting. Palm Beach County has estimated that the agreement is saving their taxpayers \$6,700,000, the appraised value of the tract based on recent County acquisitions. In addition, the agreement allows the County to utilize monies available from a \$100 million bond approved for the acquisition and initial habitat improvement of Environmentally Sensitive Lands in the

County. The BLM matching funds will contribute toward the County's trust fund established for the long term management of the tract for which bond monies are not available. Ultimately, Palm Beach County is expected to apply for a lease on the tract and the BLM's role in the management will decline. However, initially this agreement allows for one of the County's largest tracts of Florida coastal scrub to be restored and its future management assured.

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Cooperative Management in the Florida Panhandle

In the Florida panhandle, the BLM is working with Walton County and the state of Florida to provide needed public access across BLM beach-front properties, while retaining the natural resources of the tract. These small beach front tracts generally contain well-developed coastal dunes which support a wide array of flora and fauna.

Lands transferred to the state ultimately may be managed by Walton County under guidelines established in the BLM Florida Resource Management Plan (RMP) which was approved in final form June 1995.

Prior to the completion of the RMP, BLM leased the small beach front tracts of land to the County. The leases allowed the County to provide parking areas, toilet facilities and a boardwalk (over the dunes) to the beaches for visitors. As the population in Walton County continues to grow these services are becoming more important. Two tracts of land have been transferred to Walton County with two more transferrals in progress.

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IDAHO

Riverwood Ranch

A 2,272 acre ranch near the central Idaho community of Richfield had all the trappings of failure a few years ago. The ranch hadn't been inhabited for more than a decade. Its buildings were falling into disrepair, fencing was dilapidated, and weeds were beginning to overrun the place. "Not much upkeep had been done in the last ten years," says Joe Russell, a wildlife biologist who works for the BLM.

The Riverwood Ranch reverted to the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in 1985. Although the ranch was marketed, no eligible buyers stepped forth, in part because the agency had determined it could not be run at a profit. Yet the ranch had obvious

attractions. The Little Wood River, a desert trout stream, borders more than six miles of the property. With a little work, about 100 acres of the ranch could be turned into a prime wetland, providing outstanding wildlife habitat. Part of the land could be used for livestock grazing, and recreation planners saw potential for a small camping area. The view that the ranch was just another spread gone under began to be replaced by a vision of its potential.

The BLM obtained title to the ranch from the FmHA in 1995. At first, there were questions about the private property being turned over to a federal agency. "Part of the nearby community was skeptical about the acquisition," says Martha Hahn, BLM Idaho State Director. "We understood that concern, and made sure that we got together and talked through the issues. In the end, it was beneficial to us all." Meetings with the elected officials from Lincoln County, the town of Richfield and other interested parties began to identify issues and started the process of ironing them out. "We can handle most of their concerns," says Russell. "We want to show the community that we're going to allow many uses in the area, and we want their help all along the way."

Lincoln County and the BLM are already taking on the weed problem. In the future, a small horse-facility and the camping area are part of the plans. The improved fish and wildlife habitat will draw outdoor sports enthusiasts. In fact, says Russell, "We want to make the site a multiple-use showcase, with an eye toward attracting more visitors. The ranch will only improve. It will help fish and wildlife, and the community will benefit, too." All of which paints a bright future for a place that was once considered doomed to failure.

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Lemhi Habitat Cooperative Planning and Conservation Agreements

The relationship between Lemhi County, Idaho, and its federal neighbors, is not typical of what you've been hearing about in the West. The county, the BLM, the Forest Service, and other agencies all get along quite well, thank-you. There's hardly a discouraging word heard in this sprawling, scenic county on the west slope of the Continental Divide.

Relations weren't always as comfortable as they are today. In 1992, when the chinook salmon was listed as threatened, conflict, not cooperation, was the norm. The BLM came up with an array of management strategies that offered fish habitat protection on public land explains Dave Krosting, the BLM's Lemhi Resource Area manager. Management strategies were required within short timeframes and didn't allow for public involvement. This often placed us in conflict with people who depend on the public land for their living. It became obvious to many of us that if we wanted fish habitat improvement to last the public needed ownership in our efforts.

Lemhi County responded to the listing by beginning a local land-use planning effort, but with a twist: the county invited the BLM and other interested public and private entities to participate. Now, hundreds of planning meetings later, the county is enjoying the results of all the cooperative planning work. County residents can now practice on a shooting range on land formerly managed by the BLM. A new county landfill is located on property once held by the BLM. Areas along streams are improving, helping fish habitat. Recreation opportunities are growing through cooperative projects such as the Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway.

Not everyone always agrees on the issues and what the solutions are. But a willingness to listen and consider alternative views has gone a long way toward resolving differences. A former Lemhi County commissioner who is heavily involved in the process, Denny Hawley said, "our work with the land-use plan and local committees working with a federal agency can solve seemingly insurmountable problems."

One product that came out of the county planning effort, conservation agreements, or CAs, holds promise as a means to improve cooperative management in the West. The CAs guide management of riparian areas within Lemhi County regardless of ownership. It's a means of involving people in the establishment of priorities for solving riparian habitat problems within the entire watershed. Solutions are tailored to the specific circumstances within the county. Improvement projects on private land are encouraged through financial incentives or a system of credits. Use of incentives in a free-market setting allows these values to accumulate and be considered as marketable commodities. This is a unique and exciting feature that the partners believe will help lead to improved land stewardship.

As a result of county planning, many other efforts are presently underway. County planning committees are actively working on public land access, off road vehicle use, management of The Lewis and Clark National Trail, mountain bike trail development, a county wide weed management strategy, and improving road maintenance to reduce nonpoint source pollutants.

Work still needs to be done in Lemhi County. But the issues that once threatened to divide the community have produced results that are gratifying to public land users, the local government, federal agencies, and others who enjoy and use the spectacular natural resources of Lemhi County.

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LOUISIANA

Cooperative Planning

Planning efforts in Louisiana will be initiated in fiscal year 1997 by the BLM's Jackson District. Because most of the tracts are located in unincorporated areas, county level governments will be a key to assessing local needs and exploring opportunities for collaboration.

MONTANA

Stillwater Weed Program

Since 1980, the BLM has been working with many county weed districts through cooperative agreements in the Integrated Weed Management Program. A special example of the cooperative efforts between the BLM, Stillwater County weed districts, the cooperative extension service, Montana State University, private landowners, and other state and federal agencies is the annual Stillwater County Plant Management Tour. Experts in weed management from academia; local, state and federal government agencies; local farmers and ranchers; and others work closely together to host this hands-on, educational tour.

The tour began in 1988 and has been a well-attended annual event ever since. The purpose of the tour is to show federal and state agency personnel, landowners and the general public the threats from noxious weeds and how weeds can be successfully controlled through cooperative integrated weed management programs. It also showcases current local research efforts aimed at increasing our knowledge of this growing concern.

Some of the agriculture science students in the high schools in Stillwater County have been and are very active participants in this program. For example, four Columbus High School students (Ben and Luke Larson, Ken Keever and Ryan Maier) and their Vocational-Agriculture instructor, Jim Larson, were presented a Department of the Interior Award by the BLM's Director in 1994 for their work to reduce the spread of leafy spurge through the use of biological control agents. Chuck Egan, a retired Stillwater County Vo-Ag teacher, and Wayne Pearson, County Cooperative Extension and Stillwater County Noxious Weed Supervisor also received a Department of the Interior Award. This has been and continues to be a cooperative effort for the Columbus students, Montana State University, the BLM, the Stillwater County Weed Management District and others to disperse the red-headed beetle (*Oberea erythrocephala*), and flea beetles (*Aphthona cyparissiae* and *A. nigriscutis*); all biological control agents on leafy spurge.

Another example is Sandra Schaff, an Absarokee High School student who has been working with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Stillwater County Weed Management District, and the BLM on the use of sheep to control leafy spurge, especially on fishing access sites and monitoring the vegetation trend over the years from this practice. Sandra received a statewide 4-H club award in 1996 for her talk on the "Threat of Noxious Weeds and Why It Is Important to Stop Their Spread."

The Stillwater Weed Management District and Montana Weed Trust Fund purchased a Remote Automated Weather Station and the BLM is maintaining this station. This joint effort for the BLM, the ARS, high schools, and the Stillwater County Weed District and Cooperative Extension Service is to better understand the relationship of successful or unsuccessful establishment of biological weed control agents with soils and weather conditions.

Funding is provided jointly by the BLM, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, ARS, County Weed District, Cooperative Extension Service, Montana Weed Trust Fund, and the high schools.

This is an effort to educate and assist in the Integrated Weed Management Approach for the general public, private landowners, as well as state and federal land agencies. It is also an attempt to create an interest to high school students in the field of biological sciences for future managers of our natural resources.

Contact: Hank McNeel, BLM @ (406) 255-2931; or Wayne Pearson, Stillwater County Plant Management Supervisor @ (406) 322-5334.

Pompeys Pillar Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Pompeys Pillar is a registered National Landmark managed by the BLM as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). It is the site of the only remaining physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in Montana: the signature of William Clark is etched in the sandstone structure, dated July 25, 1806.

The significance of the site was recognized even in the last century. In 1882 the No. Pacific Railroad erected an iron grate in front of the structure to protect the signature. From 1955-1989 the site was privately operated as a tourist attraction. During this period the signature was protected by bulletproof glass. In November 1991, BLM purchased the site with Land and Water Conservation Funds.

Just 20 miles east of Billings on the bank of the Yellowstone River, in an agricultural area, Pompeys Pillar offers a wide array of recreational opportunities such as wildlife viewing, historic interpretation, trails, environmental education, and scenery for local residents and travelers.

In a recent partnership effort between Yellowstone County, the Pompeys Pillar Interpretive Association, and the BLM, the County obtained funding for development of a trail at the site. Funding will be provided by the state and federal Departments of Transportation through the ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) Program. It will provide for development of a fully accessible trail (concrete walkway) to the Yellowstone River from the visitors center, including an overlook at river's edge with interpretive signs. The BLM will design the project and the County

will take responsibility for constructing it. Once sites are identified for the trail and picnic areas the survey and design work can begin, which is planned for this summer. The next step, construction, is planned for the fall. There is strong congressional and community support for the work.

Contact: Dick Kodeski, BLM Manager for the Landmark @ (406)238-1541.

Beaverhead County Community Forum

In the summer of 1994, the Beaverhead County Commission sponsored an agreement (MOU) between state and federal agencies in the county. The purpose of the MOU was to promote a coordinated approach to planning in Beaverhead County and, among other objectives, "to facilitate better communication and understanding of how each entity's individual actions benefit the area's resources and people." The MOU was signed by the following entities: the Dillon Resource Area, BLM; the Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, US Fish and Wildlife Service; the Big Hole National Battlefield, National Park Service; the Beaverhead National Forest, US Forest Service; the Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks and the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, State of Montana; and the Beaverhead County Commission.

In May 1995, this was supplemented with an agreement that outlined operating procedures, and it created an Interagency Steering Group (ISG) of representatives of the seven signatories that would "Provide oversight of the process, establish planning area priorities, and maintain consistency and direction...." Staff to support the ISG come from agency personnel and the Beaverhead County Planner. Shortly after the Beaverhead County Commission initiated the MOU with the major land management agencies, it asked the Montana Consensus Council to help engage county residents in addressing the rapid changes and conflicts surrounding natural resources. After a public workshop in January 1995, citizens volunteered to create the Beaverhead County Community Forum, an organization devoted to seeking agreement on land use and growth management issues in the county. The Forum established ground rules that emphasized consensus processes for decisionmaking, the building of skills among participants for self-assessment, and open collaboration with a full range of stakeholders.

The group sought a membership that represented key constituencies in the county, such as ranchers, business leaders, and environmental advocates, and developed a committed, core group of citizens and agency personnel that reflected a balance of the various interest groups across the county. The Forum has evolved to take on a broad portfolio of activities, subcommittees on public lands, social and economic assessments, communications and housing. Recognizing that the Beaverhead County Community Forum could serve as a valuable vehicle to express citizen-based points of view on desired future conditions for public lands, the Beaverhead ISG charged the Forum with the task of generating a "vision" for the Pioneer Mountains landscape

area. The group completed their vision in late 1995, and shortly thereafter began developing parallel products to describe social and economic conditions within the county as well as other initiatives to support local government's participation in land use planning. The group understood that it would also be involved in additional vision exercises for other landscape areas that fall within Beaverhead County.

The Montana Consensus Council and citizens volunteer their time. The Forum has received a grant for \$2,000 to help fund mailings of newsletters, etc., but is searching for additional funding to help keep notes and type planning documents.

Contact: Rich Maggio, BLM Land Use Specialist @ (406) 683-2337; or Rick Hartz, Beaverhead County Planner @ (406) 683-4868.

NEW MEXICO

BLM Signs MOU With State/Counties re: EIS for Standards and Guidelines

On April 2, 1997, the BLM and New Mexico Lieutenant Governor Walter Bradley signed a first-of-its-kind Memorandum of Understanding to work together with counties on a BLM environmental impact statement for New Mexico's standards and guidelines. New Mexico member counties asked to coordinate county participation in the NEPA assessment process regarding the *standards* for public land health and *guidelines* for livestock grazing. The BLM invited every county in New Mexico to participate, and nine agreed to work as "cooperating agencies" on the project. The counties will provide specialized and local information, particularly regarding custom and culture, from their localities for the EIS. (Traditionally, federal agencies alone develop EISs, which are required by federal law.)

The precedent-setting agreement spells out that the BLM, State, counties, and Navajo Nation will work together on the EIS. Since 1995, New Mexico's Resource Advisory Council worked to develop public health standards and livestock grazing guidelines. In October 1996, the Council made its recommendations to the BLM, which decided to take them forward in the form of a statewide EIS. No other state and none of the other 24 Resource Advisory Councils in the nation have taken such an approach, to collaborate with all the interested players as partners in the NEPA assessment process. The nine counties that agreed to be partners in the project include: Catron, Chaves, Eddy, Grant, Hidalgo, Lincoln, Luna, Otero, and Sierra Counties.

Contact: J.W. Whitney, BLM New Mexico Environmental Specialist @ (505) 438-7438.

Save Our Bosque Task Force

The BLM has joined with Socorro County, the city of Socorro, and numerous other

public and private entities to form the Save Our Bosque Task Force to restore and enhance the riparian areas adjacent to the Rio Grande. Before forming the Task Force, Socorro County and BLM continually struggled with the problems of illegal trash dumping along the River, and excessive partying and littering by local teenagers. The first clean-up effort in 1992, lasting all summer, garnered 9,000 cubic yards of garbage.

Once the Task Force formed, it pooled its resources and began an extensive clean-up initiative, followed by the development of an interpretive trail system and recreation facilities. The first of six segments of the trail system, Socorro Nature Area, was dedicated in April 1997. It is a two-mile long interpretive trail with 30 numbered sites enlightening visitors about the riparian vegetation, the river and the culture of the Rio Grande. The trail passes an aquatic interpretive pond complete with an observation deck. Just beyond the trail is an amphitheater with a capacity of 150 people. The Area also provides two parking lots, picnic areas, a covered group shelter and 12 primitive campsites.

Work on the second segment began the Summer of 1997. The Socorro Riverine Park will be linked to the Socorro Nature Area by a 5-mile hiking, biking and horse-back riding trail. A group of 15 youths, 5 from Socorro's summer youth program, have been hired to build the trail. Work on the Escondida Lake area will begin in the Fall of 1997. The Lake, situated half-way between the Riverine Park and the Nature Area will be made about twice its present size. Recreation facilities around the Lake will be redeveloped and managed by Socorro County. Interpretive signs will be posted to educate visitors in much the same way as for the Nature Area.

Contact: Wes Anderson, BLM Socorro, @ (505) 835-0412; or Socorro County Manager _____ @ (505) ____-____.

BLM/Otero County Partnership

The BLM works closely with the Otero County Public Land Users Advisory Council to resolve issues involving public and private lands. The Council is composed of elected county officials, local ranchers, environmentalists and business people. This evolving partnership has become an effective problem-solving work group and also evaluates proposed land management projects. If proposals are found to have merit, the Council refers them to the County Commission for action. The BLM attends Council meetings on a regular basis to update members on project status and activities. Other counties in southwestern New Mexico are being encouraged to adopt this model and create similar work groups.

Noxious Weeds. A Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted to coordinate the management of noxious weeds on public and private lands in Otero County between a group of private, county, state and federal agencies. The program

intent is to manage, prevent and eradicate whenever possible plants designated as noxious by the County Commissioners with the consensus of the responsible land management agency officials. Of the 6.2 million acres of BLM land in the Las Cruces District, approximately 14,590 acres are infested with noxious weeds, mainly on highway rights-of-ways. African Rue is the primary offender, with the Malta Starthistle not far behind. The Otero Soil and Water Conservation District is the lead for running this program for the Otero County Commission. The Commission has committed \$10,000 toward getting this program started. The BLM Las Cruces District has committed initially to provide \$5,000 of herbicide, complete an environmental assessment, and process the required paperwork.

Three Rivers Petroglyph Site. One of the largest and most interesting rock art sites in the Southwest is the Three Rivers Petroglyph Site in south central New Mexico. The basaltic ridge rising above the Three Rivers valley contains more than 21,000 petroglyphs, including masks, sunbursts, wildlife, hand prints, and geometric designs. Every year 20,000 or more visitors picnic at the site and hike one of two trails to view the petroglyphs.

The BLM recently upgraded the visitor facilities and picnic shelters for the world-renowned cultural site. New shelters were placed on existing cement pads, and one new shelter for a large group was constructed. Several wheelchair accessible features were added such as a restroom, a trail to the first set of petroglyphs, a spotting scope and a picnic table at that first stop. Another trail leads to a nearby village on the banks of Three Rivers creek where the creators of the petroglyphs were assumed to dwell. Foundations of three types of prehistoric structures are visible. In recent years erosion has damaged the walking trail and the adjacent road, exposing the sites. BLM has joined with Otero County to rebuild the Three Rivers access road. A local ranch provided gravel, the County provided heavy equipment, engineering and operational expertise, while BLM completed the cultural and environmental clearances needed to begin work.

Laborcita Watershed Plan. Laborcita Canyon, translated from Spanish is "Little Farm." The Canyon was occupied initially some 5,000 years ago, the Jornada Branch of the Mogollon Culture from A.D. 200 to 1450, followed by some of the earliest farming and livestock endeavors by the first Spanish and Mexican settlers, and used as a commons by nearby villagers. Today, the area includes Mescalero Reservation lands, forest land, public land, state trust land, and private land, intermingled along the canyon.

The Laborcita watershed is one of several watersheds comprising the South Tularosa Issue Area. Located near the village of La Luz, Otero County, the watershed contains a perennial stream. The BLM and local community selected this issue area to work on together, and in doing so, improve the health of the land while recognizing and integrating traditional customary uses of the land, and as a process to learn how to effectively work as partners across the community in identification of common needs and solutions to conflict. Key goals include watershed stabilization, riparian area

enhancement, increase in plant and animal species diversity, reduction of flood events where village growth is occurring and planned, provision for traditional historic uses of the land, and protection of prehistoric cultural resources. The Otero County PLUAC played a key role in this effort by assisting in plan initiation, community coordination, input and planning.

Contact: Tim Sanders, BLM Caballo Resource Area, @ (505) 525-4393.

NEVADA

Carson City Urban Interface Plan Amendment

The plan amendment was part of a pioneering joint land use planning effort with the City and County of Carson City for management of public and private lands in Carson City. The BLM and Carson City pooled their resources to produce the plan. The BLM contributed its expertise in natural resource management and environmental assessment while Carson City contributed its expertise in public involvement and infrastructure.

In developing the plan, the BLM and Carson City defined boundaries appropriate for urban interface management actions. We developed a shared vision of how those lands should be managed through an extensive public involvement process that included 12 joint BLM/City public meetings and another 10 Technical Advisory Committee meetings that coordinated our efforts with other Federal and State of Nevada agencies and adjoining local jurisdictions. This shared vision included managing public lands to enhance the quality of life for Carson City residents by preserving open space and providing state and local agencies with lands needed to develop community infrastructure, including the Highway 395 bypass, school sites and new park and recreation facilities. These activities were strongly supported by the public. The plan amendment was approved by the Carson City/County Board of Supervisors on July 10, 1996 and by the BLM on October 11, 1996.

Since the plan was completed, it has received international recognition. A delegation from Shandong Province, Peoples Republic of China, visited Nevada to learn cooperative intergovernmental relations in land use planning as related to the plan amendment. In addition, the American Planning Association issued Carson City and the BLM an award for excellence in planning for this effort.

Contact: David Loomis, BLM @ (702) 885-6149; Rob Joiner, City and County of Carson City @ (702) 887-2180.

Homestake Mining Project

The foundation was laid for an important cooperative effort between the BLM Battle

Mountain District, Eureka County, state and local agencies, and Homestake Mining Company in late 1995. This cooperative effort began to take form with Homestake Mining Company's proposal to locate a 696 acre open pit gold mine .7 mile northwest of the town of Eureka on public land managed by the BLM. Because the proposed development was so close to the town of Eureka, a town listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and since it was visible from Highway 50, many issues, whether born of public concern, regulatory nature, or both, arose. The BLM determined that an environmental impact statement (EIS) of this mining proposal would be necessary to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

A partnership was formalized between the BLM and Eureka County in March of 1996 when the chairman of the Eureka County Commissioners and the Battle Mountain BLM District Manager signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This MOU designated Eureka County as a cooperating agency, identified contacts and specified responsibilities.

Eureka County appointed a special committee to work with the BLM and Homestake Mining Company. Although there was one Eureka County representative designated to be the BLM's main contact, the special committee worked as a team, actively participating in all phases of the EIS preparation. This involvement included reviewing all draft and final documents, providing timely and specific comments, attending meetings and assisting in the development of mitigation measures. The Nevada Division of Wildlife and the State Historic Preservation Office were cooperating agencies in the permitting effort as well.

Many meetings were held throughout the process and communications among the BLM, its cooperating agencies, and Homestake Mining Company were open, friendly and productive. Feasible alternatives to the proposed action were formulated and mitigation measures were developed.

Approval of Homestake's plan of operation was granted on February 3, 1997. The project is considered to be a success in environmental consensus building. Eureka County and all participants were willing to communicate in a positive way, to learn how the NEPA process works and to offer their time and expertise in a manner that was crucial to the successful permitting of this project.

Contact: Jerry Smith, BLM @ (702) 635-4000; Mike Protani, Homestake Mining Company @ (702) 237-7048; Lenny Fiorenzi, Eureka County @ (702) 237-5372; Rory Lamp, Nevada Division of Wildlife @ (702) 738-5332; Scott Brooks Miller, State Historic Preservation Office @ (702) 687-7601.

Tri-County Partnership

Lincoln, Nye, and White Pine Counties have joined the BLM and the Humbolt-

Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) designed to improve cooperation, consultation, and coordination in managing the public lands. Participants agreed to use a collaborative approach to land management planning and decisions to affect sustainable economic communities and healthy ecosystems. This document provides for joint participation in planning, decision making, data sharing, and development of supplemental agreements.

The relationship grew after a "Tri-County" forum among the parties. The BLM hosted the first meeting in the fall of 1995, and further improved communication, respect and trust through subsequent quarterly meetings. Participants adopted the strategies of active listening, openness in discussing concerns, acceptance of criticism, emphasis on improving the way we do business and improving customer service with a focus on meeting the local needs while pursuing legislative and regulatory mandates. The counties now host the meetings on a rotating basis.

Development of the MOU became an agenda item along with other topics of business. Completion of the MOU in late winter 1997 was a comfortable result of the mutual cooperation and participation of the parties. The parties are jointly pursuing development of funding sources.

Two years ago, these counties were actively challenging federal agency authority to administer the public lands. All parties understand that there may not be agreement on all issues, but the right to discuss points of disagreement is critical if the best interests of the public are to be served. This MOU documents an improved spirit of mutual respect, trust and cooperation.

Contact: Gene Kolkman, BLM Ely District Manager @ (702) 289-1800; Monica J. Schwalbach, Assistant Forest Supervisor, Humbolt-Toiyabe National Forest; Edward E. Wright, Chairman, Lincoln County Commission; Richard Carver, Chairman, Nye County Commission; Carol O. McKenzie, Chairman, White Pine County Commission

Water Canyon Recreation Area

Water Canyon is located in northeastern Humboldt County, just two miles from the City of Winnemucca, Nevada. The perennial stream with the cottonwood trees and chokecherry bushes lining the water course is a very popular recreation area with the local residents. They use the area for fishing, camping, hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, hunting and other outdoor activities. Recently, the BLM acquired some private land, enabling it to manage the area as one comprehensive unit. The BLM developed an agreement with Humboldt County and the City to create a management plan and provide for joint management of the area. The primary goal of the agreement and the subsequent plan is to protect the surface and subsurface water quality. Other goals are to provide recreation opportunities and to preserve wildlife habitat, trees, grassy meadows and riparian areas.

The management plan has been developed for the area in close coordination with the City and County. All relevant NEPA documents have been completed. The Bureau will install and maintain facilities such as camping and picnicking areas and most roads and trails. BLM will provide an interpretative program which might include an interpretive brochure and a signed foot trail. BLM will also arrange for a seasonal caretaker (budget permitting) and develop a plan with Winnemucca to handle litter collection and tree planting. Humboldt County will provide communication equipment for the caretaker, maintain the main road, and may provide assistance and/or funding for the design, construction and maintenance of facilities.

A citizen's advisory group, composed of invited members of resource user groups and all interested members of the public, provided input during the formation of the management plan along with the partners and the Nevada Division of Wildlife. Numerous public meetings were held and many presentations on the planning process were made.

The implementation of the plan has begun. A gate has been placed to restrict vehicle use in the upper reaches of the watershed during the wet winter and early spring months to protect the watershed. Law enforcement patrols are frequently made by Humboldt County and the BLM.

Among the actions that are yet to be taken are restricting vehicles to existing roads and trails and the development of five short term camping sites and up to 30 picnic sites.

Contact: Bud Cribley, BLM Assistant District Manager, Nonrenewable Resources, Winnemucca Field Office, 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd, Winnemucca NV, 89445, @ (702) 623-1500; Board of County Commissioners, Humboldt County; and Winnemucca City Council, City-County Complex, Winnemucca, NV, 89445.

NORTH DAKOTA

McHenry County Insectary

An insectary--a haven for the keeping or rearing of living insects--was established on a 40-acre parcel of BLM-administered public land in McHenry County, North Dakota. In 1989 several hundred flea beetles were released in an area that was heavily infested by the noxious weed leafy spurge. The beetles, an important biological control agent that feed on the spurge, have now spread over about 5 acres as they continue to reproduce and devour leafy spurge. They have the ability to reduce a dense stand of spurge down to where it only makes up 3-5 percent of the plant composition. As the spurge population goes down, so does the population of flea beetles.

Leafy spurge has become one of the leading noxious weeds in the upper midwest, the

northwest, and the adjoining Canadian Provinces. If no control measures are taken, leafy spurge will dominate the landscape in a matter of a few years. Flea beetles were first used by the Canadians for leafy spurge control. The release at the insectary was fairly early for North Dakota and considered somewhat experimental.

The BLM cooperates with the McHenry County Weed Board and the County Extension Agent in managing the insectary--including collecting and distributing beetles to regions with leafy spurge infestation. The County Extension Agent, Mike Rose, who is directly responsible for the insectary, also uses the site for weed-control tours and workshops.

Contact: Don Ruffedt, BLM, @ (701) 225-9148; or Mike Rose, McHenry County Extension Agent @ (701) 537-5405.

Bowman County Low-Water Crossing (Bowman County, North Dakota)

A low-water crossing of the Little Missouri River was recently approved in Bowman County, North Dakota. The nearest all-season crossing, located about 10 miles north at Marmarth, North Dakota, requires a lengthy trip and a significant investment of time to cover the short distance from one side of the river to the other.

The low-water crossing integrates previously disconnected areas of oil field development where high levels of exploration and development activity continue. Completion of the crossing will mean a significant reduction of commercial traffic and associated deterioration on county roads. Public support was extremely high because the crossing will save ranchers, farmers and oil workers many miles each year as they carry out their work.

The project is a cooperative effort between Bowman County, the BLM, Burlington Resources, Inc., and Continental Resources, Inc. Burlington Resources and Continental Resources provided the funding along with a contribution from the County. County Commissioners reviewed the engineering company's design. Both the engineering company and BLM conducted a "scoping Phase." The State Water Commission worked closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the issuance of the 404 Permit. BLM processed the environmental assessment and issued the right of way grant in September 1996.

Construction of the crossing began in the Fall of '96 and is still on-going.

Contact: Don Ruffedt and Linda Gisvold, BLM, @ (701) 225-9148; or Dan Brosz, Engineer with Brosz Engineering, Bowman, ND, representing Bowman County.

OREGON

Regional Problem Solving Program

Deschutes County was designated by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development as a pilot project for the Regional Problem Solving Program. The Regional Problem Solving Program addresses issues Deschutes County faces attributed to poor rural development from the 1950-60s. These issues include wildland fire hazard, land exchange opportunities, wildlife protection, groundwater protection, and sewage disposal. The Prineville District of BLM is an active participant in the advisory/work groups comprised of local, state and federal agencies, and private and public organizations.

Community Involvement

In the BLM Salem District, local managers participate in several watershed councils functioning in the region. These councils cover the Nestucca River, Santiam River, and Yamhill River watersheds. The watershed councils are the basic forum for citizen and county involvement in natural resource management. At the local watershed level, federal land managers meet with local officials and residents to identify issues (affecting federal and non-federal lands) and identify means to address them. One of the key needs of most watershed councils is data. In conjunction with watershed analyses, the BLM has provided data & maps for use at these discussions.

Cooperative Management

The Chickahominy Reservoir/Recreation Site, developed by the BLM, is cooperatively managed by the Burns District, Harney County, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). A Cooperative Management Agreement with ODFW and Harney County has been signed to manage the area and provide funds and materials to upgrade the site and protect resource values. The BLM will manage the recreation site and provide improvements, Harney County will provide manpower and equipment for roads, parking, campground developments and improvements, and the ODFW will manage the fishery and the majority of shoreline, and provide materials for fencing, signing, etc.

County Development Assistance

For the last 30 years Deschutes County and the Prineville District of BLM have had an active exchange program to assist in county development. The most recent example is the Cline Falls Exchange. As a result of the exchange the BLM received lands along the Deschutes River near the Wild and Scenic Corridor which have historic and recreational values. Deschutes County received lands for industrial expansion and for a new county fairgrounds.

Deschutes River Site Rehabilitation

The nationally recognized Deschutes River near Maupin is a popular recreation area used primarily for rafting, fishing and camping activities. Working with the Oregon Marine Board, Wasco County obtained a \$50,000 grant to help develop/rehabilitate Harpham Flat. This site is owned by the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and jointly managed by the BLM's Prineville District and the State of Oregon. These groups worked to improve Harpham Flat by installing traffic barriers, parking areas, soil stability projects, handicap accessible toilet facilities, and an improved boat launch.

Cooperative Fire Training Program

Cooperative Fire Training and Fire Prevention Work is being done with county fire services. BLM trains Medford District employees in wildland fire strategy and tactics as well as doing cooperative wildland fire prevention work with all fire services within Jackson and Josephine Counties.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Bear Butte Creek Channel Stabilization and Flood Control Study

Severe flooding on Bear Butte Creek continues to be a problem for the City of Sturgis, downstream landowners, and the BLM's Fort Meade Recreation Area. Flood events cause the usual water damages but also cause severe erosion and deposition of large amounts of debris and boulders in the channel. This in turn causes damage to the local infrastructure--streets, sewers, etc.--as well as to private homes and businesses.

In an effort to solve the flooding problems, the BLM has engaged in a flood control study jointly with the City of Sturgis, the Meade County Commission, the South Dakota Departments of Transportation and Game, Fish and Parks, Meade 46-1 School District, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The goal of this study is to find ways to improve bed and bank stability, fisheries habitat and 100-year flood capacity. The initial interagency meeting was held on Nov. 29, 1995.

The BLM has already gathered survey data, conducted aerial photography, analyzed the data, and forwarded the analysis to the Corps of Engineers for further study. Once the study is completed, a financial implementation plan will be prepared which will identify financing capabilities and opportunities to resolve the flooding problems.

Contact: Tom Steger, BLM, @ (605) 892-2526; or Neal Rowett, Meade County Commissioner @ (605) 347-2360.

Fort Meade Recreation Area Weed Control Project

The BLM and the Meade County Weed Board have entered into a contract for control of noxious weeds in the 6,700 acre Fort Meade Recreation Area. The goal of the ongoing project is to both control and eradicate weeds at this popular recreation site.

The Area lies on the northeastern edge of the Black Hills. The south half contains stands of Ponderosa pine interspersed with hardwood draws. Several streams run through the area. The north half is rolling grassland. The lands bordering the Area are owned by the federal government, the State, City of Sturgis, and private landowners.

A broad variety of resource based recreational opportunities can be pursued at the Recreation Area. Some of these activities include hunting, fishing, horseback riding, hiking, camping, birdwatching, bicycling, picnicking, winter sports, a range for shooting muzzleloading rifles, sightseeing, and pleasure driving on a national Backcounty Byway.

The weeds Leafy spurge and Canadian thistles are the primary offenders. The spurge has been contained to less than a dozen small spots while the thistle seems to be increasing slowly. BLM has been controlling weeds with chemicals for spot treatment which will continue on small patches of land. In 1997 a bio-control release will also be used on Canadian thistle in one area.

Funding for the Weed Board's activities is provided from BLM's Range Improvement Fund.

Contact: Tom Steger, BLM, @ (605)-892-2526; or Gary Ness, Meade County, @ (605) 347-2436.

UTAH

Canyon Country Partnership

In southwestern Utah members of the Canyon Country Partnership are working together to coordinate land use planning and management activities where agency boundaries meet or overlap. The Partnership also seeks compatibility with community development goals to provide for social and economic needs without undue harm to the integrity of natural systems.

Partnership members include the BLM, Grand, Emery, San Juan and Wayne Counties, US Forest Service, National Park Service, Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, Utah Office of Planning and Budget, Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining, Utah Department of Transportation, Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

The key areas of focus for the Partnership are scientific analysis of short and long term effects of management decisions, data standards collection, generation and standardization of GIS and other automated information, and communication enhancement with focus on issues of community concern.

To accomplish its mission, the Partnership has adopted the following goals: develop a sustainable land management strategy based on the integration land ecology, technology, and human needs and desires; discuss and resolve issues related to the region with emphasis on social and economic impact of federal land management decisions; provide for growth, minimum impact on natural resources, recreation opportunity and tourism, scientific application of management strategies, and to provide for sustainability of natural resources.

Other areas addressed by the Partnership include grazing, noxious weeds, woodland management, abandoned mines, river management, environment education, school children programs, mineral exploration, equipment pooling, law enforcement agreements, public outreach and neighborhood forums. The goal is to do this and more within a spirit of cooperation.

The Partnership meets on a monthly basis to review opportunities and receive progress reports from various committees. Funding of projects is shared depending on areas of responsibility and agreements.

Contact: Kate Kitchell, BLM Moab Field Office Manager, @ (801) 259-6111; or Kaaron Jorgen, @ (801) 259-4056.

Southern Utah Planning Authorities Council

All levels of government in southern Utah, including federal, state and county governments, have joined together to create a structure and develop a process for coordinating numerous planning efforts. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) called for the creation of the Southern Utah Planning Authorities Council (SUPAC).

This collaborative and interactive partnership focuses on all areas of land planning. The Council meets on a bi-monthly basis to review opportunities, recommend courses of action and review progress.

The Council has several goals which are to facilitate the establishment of shared goals and strategies for resource management and development, to promote awareness and understanding of the legal requirements and objectives, to enhance intergovernmental cooperation and public participation, and to serve as a clearinghouse for the exchange of information.

The Council is composed of many partners including Washington, Garfield, Iron and

Kane Counties; Washington County Water Conservancy District; Five County Associations of Governments; the Paiute Tribe; BLM; the US Forest Service; the National Park Service; the Natural Resources Conservation Service; the US Fish and Wildlife Service; the US Army Corps of Engineers; the Utah Congressional Delegation; the Utah Departments of Agriculture, Transportation and Natural Resources, the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget and the Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration. Recently the MOU was modified to add Garfield county as a member of SUPAC and also expanded the role of SUPAC to include Garfield County.

Each member contributes a \$60 annual fee. Project funding is shared by SUPAC members with some members providing specific funding depending on the initiative and area of responsibility.

Contact: G. William Lamb, BLM Utah State Director, @(801) 539-4010; or Scott Truman, Southern Utah University, @ (801) 586-7738.

WASHINGTON

Lincoln County and the BLM have agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding to communicate and cooperate on management issues affecting public lands in the county. Under this MOU, numerous working relationships which enhance the use of public lands have developed. For example, the Lincoln County Road Department builds and maintains BLM roads which are important for recreation. This work is completed on a cost reimbursable basis, and has provided access to key winter and summer fishing lakes.

A second and very exciting project involves a cooperative project with the county and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop fishing and boating access to a 130 acre lake which had been dry for the past ten years. This lake has been the historical fishing and water recreation area for the community of Odessa, Washington, and recently came into public ownership through an exchange. The county will provide the labor and equipment to improve a road and help build a boat ramp. Both BLM and the county agree that through this MOU, we have improved the management of the public lands and have provided for local use and economic development of the tourist industry.

Similar MOU's also have been signed and are being used to do work with Ferry, Stevens, and Benton Counties.

Contact:

WYOMING

Rural Development Council

Wyoming Department of Agriculture, US West, the BLM, the Forest Service, The Nature Conservancy, the Northern Arapaho and Shoshone tribes, the Farm Bureau, the Petroleum Association of Wyoming, and several counties work together on the Wyoming State Rural Development Council.

The Council consists of a diverse network of individuals and groups whose goals are to become recognized statewide as a neutral forum for identification and resolution of multi-jurisdictional issues; facilitate a consensus building process where polarization of groups and individuals has occurred; and develop innovative solutions through dialogue, cooperation and dissemination of information. The full Council meets once a year with the executive committee meeting four times a year.

The Council first met in March 1995, and has accomplished the following: provided neutral forums where diverse interests to address a wide variety of issues ranging from land use management processes to business finance to affordable housing; developed a clearinghouse for state and local economic data; organized a neutral meeting to allow leaders from industry, state and federal entities to resolve important historic preservation implementation issues; created a project feasibility team to bring together resources to assist developing businesses; trained partners on consensus building skills and developed a clearinghouse of available facilitators; and created a universal application form for multiple publicly funded business finance requests, among other accomplishments.

A few specific practices were adopted by BLM to better its working relationship with counties and other communities. Copies of news releases announcing planned activities are provided to County Commissioners before widespread distribution of the release is made. Information such as Federal Register notices are now posted on BLM's web page. Data bases referencing natural resources data and land records once available only to other federal agencies are now accessible to counties and other state and local government agencies.

Contact: Alan Kesterke, Associate State Director, BLM Wyoming State Office, @ (307) 775-6001.

Snake River Corridor Project

The Snake River, located in Wyoming, supports a vast number of uses, all having ardent sponsors with differing ideas on what is best for the River corridor. Activities such as biking, hiking, cross-country skiing, watching wildlife, ranching, flat and white water floating, fishing, hunting, gravel extraction, and home building are all popular. Such a variety of uses presents challenges for stakeholders and management agencies to responsibly allocate resource use and plan future activities in the River

corridor.

The BLM, Teton and Lincoln counties, Grand Teton National Park, Bridger-Teton National Forest, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Teton County Natural Resource District, Wyoming Department of Transportation, Lower Valley Power and Light, the University of Wyoming, the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning, Jackson Hole Trout Unlimited, US Army Corps of Engineers, Wyoming State Engineer's Office, the US Geological Survey, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, have all come together to jointly manage the Snake River corridor. Originally this group got together on a monthly basis. Now, the group meets an average of once a quarter. However, separate activities involving different members goes on all the time.

As an offshoot of this arrangement, the Teton County Natural Resource District, and Teton County have partnered with the BLM to develop and maintain recreation sites in the area. Funding and labor costs are shared. The Teton County Natural Resource District installed toilet facilities at the Wilson Boat Ramp for which Teton County provides long-term maintenance. The South Park Bridge site is next on the development agenda to serve as a desperately needed access point for the public.

Contact: Dave Vesterby, BLM Pinedale Resource Area, @ (307) 347-4358.

Yellowstone Ecosystem Trail Heads

The BLM, the Park County Parks and Recreation Department, Shoshone Back Country Horsemen, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, U.S. Forest Service, Park County commissioners, and private landowners have joined together to develop trail heads and related recreational facilities in high use areas of the Yellowstone Ecosystem. The BLM and Park County Parks and Recreation Department drafted a Cooperative Agreement for the purpose of sharing personnel, materials and funding to accomplish these projects.

Over the past three years, the Bobcat/Houlihan, 4-Bear, and Hogan/Luce trail heads have been completed, with more planned in the future. Each site offers trail access, trailer parking and short-term horse accommodations, and toilet. Additionally, the Hogan/Luce trail head and recreation site provides access to two reservoirs and camping. The three trailheads resolve access and trespass issues while providing access to the national forest.

All three projects were completed with materials and labor contributed by the partners. The Shoshone Backcountry Horsemen volunteered their services to construct and install horse facilities. Some of the local landowners assisted with heavy equipment needs (dozer and backhoe). The U.S. Forest Service built approximately 4 miles of trail associated with access to 4-Bear Mountain. The Park County Judge directed

community service for youth crimes/violations of law, where BLM identified specific work to be performed. In addition, Park County Road and Bridge Department supplied some equipment and labor for these projects.

The most notable success of this project is that all the partners participated in the preliminary project planning on the ground before site plans were ever developed, enabling all projects to be constructed within one year of inception. As a result, other partners have been approaching the BLM to work on future projects in similar ways.

Contact: Duane Whitmer, Area Manager, BLM Cody Resource Area, Cody, @ (307) 587-2216; Leonard Bopp, @ (307) 868-2333 or Rob Schober @ (307) 587-2550, both with Park County Parks and Recreation Board.

Contact: A.J. Martinez, BLM, @ (801) 339-4018

Green River Basin Advisory Committee

The Green River Basin Advisory Committee (GRBAC) is a group which was officially chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act to advise the Secretary of the Interior on oil and gas issues in Southwest Wyoming and Northwest Colorado. GRBAC has a total of 17 voting members comprised of representatives from the county commissions of Sweetwater and Carbon Counties in Wyoming and Moffat County, Colorado as well as representatives from the energy industry, academia, environmental or resource conservation groups, the public, and government representatives from Wyoming and Colorado. The GRBAC convened in March 1996 with an organizational meeting open to the public. Public interest and participation was high as evidenced by the attendance of approximately 1,200 people at the initial meeting and the extensive verbal and written comments received from interested parties. On February 3, 1997, the GRBAC wrapped up its yearlong examination of natural gas development and environmental issues when it issued a report recommending numerous energy-related management actions to Secretary Babbitt.

After five meetings the GRBAC made recommendations which would reduce delays and costs associated with reasonable oil and gas development while protecting environmental and other resource values. GRBAC's preliminary report contained three consensus recommendations covering 1) the streamlining of the NEPA process, 2) royalty relief for the oil and gas program, and 3) road design standards. The last three GRBAC meetings covered a wide variety of issues and the development of three additional recommendations related to 1) transportation planning resulting from oil and gas development, 2) mitigation and monitoring guidelines designed to help surface

MULTI-STATE

Colorado Plateau Initiative

The Colorado Plateau Initiative is a joint local, state and federal initiative for Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. The Plateau area is 130,000 square miles of predominantly rural mixed estate. BLM administers a portion of this area which traditionally had been used for ranching, logging and mining. The lands have added value because of the rich supply of minerals including strategic minerals, oil and gas, vast vegetation and significant scenic resources. The boundary of the Colorado Plateau is also the boundary within which Anasazi sites are found today. BLM is working in partnership to develop long-term planning for the region, which has seen a dramatic increase in tourism and demand for recreational opportunities. Visitation to BLM lands alone has tripled in certain areas since 1990. One challenge will be balancing this increasing interest in recreation with the existing demand for traditional uses.

Contact: A.J. Martinez, BLM, @ (801) 539-4018

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resource users enhance effective use and conservation of all resources through eco-royalty relief, and 3) opportunities for partnership offering creative ideas for concerned parties to work together and educate others on their daily presence on public lands.

Contact: Bob Bennett, Deputy State Director, Minerals and Lands Authorizations, BLM Wyoming State Office, Cheyenne @ (307) 775-6148.

Eastside Ecosystem Coalition of Counties

In 1993, at the direction of President Clinton, an effort was launched to address regional scale natural resource issues and provide management guidance for 75 million acres of federal land in Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Montana, and small portions of Utah, Nevada and Wyoming. This effort, called the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project, recently produced a scientific assessment and two environmental impact statements. The scientific assessment characterizes and assesses the landscape, ecosystem, social and economic processes and function, and describes the probable outcomes of continued management practices and trends. The Eastside and Upper Columbia River Basin EISs each describe seven alternative ecosystem management strategies from which the US Forest Service and BLM can make decisions that will adjust and update agency land management plans and respond to issues and needs. That same year, the Association of Counties for Idaho, Oregon and Washington formed the Eastside Ecosystem Coalition of Counties in support of the Project. The Coalition's cooperation and support has been crucial as the Project develops a science-based approach to management of federal lands in the basin. An additional benefit is that more than 170 computer-mapped data themes will be available to agency employees, tribes, other governments, interest groups, and the public.

Contact:

Ecosystem Restoration/Jobs-in-the Woods

The Northwest Forest Plans brings together ecosystem management, economic development, and interagency coordination. One part of the Plan's economic adjustment initiative, ecosystem restoration, is reflected in the Jobs-in-the-Woods (JITW) program. This program is designed to accomplish ecosystem restoration while providing economic assistance to the forest industry workers in the Pacific Northwest.

The scope of work offered through JITW contracts is expanding to include such efforts as resource inventory and monitoring; project design, mapping, and analysis; road reconstruction for sediment reduction; culvert replacement for fish passage; and vegetation enhancement. These activities were traditionally completed by BLM personnel. Partners include the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Native American Tribes, local watershed restoration groups, County Resource Conservation Districts, college and university foundations, and many others. The following are good examples of work BLM and counties are doing together.

The BLM's Salem District has helped develop and use three demonstration crews. These crews of displaced forest workers are hired through another organization such as Oregon Department of Forestry or local employment agencies. The BLM, Forest Service, counties, and forest land owners use the crews on lands they manage. The employer of record is reimbursed for the cost of the crew. Many aspects of the work are atypical forest work; i.e. stream and riparian restoration, stream inventories, etc. In conjunction with the work, local instructors from community colleges and a variety of agencies train the workers on topics relevant to operating a forest business. Training topics include preparing bids on work, getting a business license, supervision, and a variety of introductory natural resource management fields. Workers are being trained to be the forest workers of the future to implement ecosystem management.

A specific example of work targeted for a demonstration crew is found in the North Coast Ecosystem Work Force Initiative. This is a locally based non-profit natural resource foundation that seeks to combine environmental restoration and economic and work force development. The group includes and serves county governments, watershed councils, teachers and students, existing and dislocated workers in natural resource industries, and forest land owners and managers. The group will develop economic incentives for non-federal landowners to do restoration work. BLM's Tillamook Resource Area, of the Salem District, participates in the group's activities.

All western Oregon counties, state and federal agencies, Tribes and BLM regularly participate in the Ecosystem Investment Team and the State Community Economic Revitalization Team. These regional teams also include labor leaders, adult education leaders and many others. This group's activities include developing processes for effectively managing watershed restoration/JITW funds from the federal government, identifying and resolving issues relating to worker retraining, and encouraging the development of innovative contracting methods for accomplishing work.

The BLM's Northern California Resource Areas (NORCAL) awarded eighteen JITW projects during fiscal year 1996 worth \$1,030,000. All projects were administered through the Arcata and Redding Resource Areas. Awards included four extensive system road improvement projects to reduce sediment inputs into streams and to repair storm damage, a major stream channel stabilization project to correct impacts from turn-of-the-century hydraulic mining, upland non-system road and skid trail obliteration, fuels management, timber stand improvement designed to accelerate development of late-successional forest characteristics, exotic plant species eradication from riparian forests, construction and placement of bat roost structures, construction and placement of "bear-proof" food containers and trash receptacles, and placement of

spawning gravel. JITW contracts provided approximately 133 jobs to the local economies, predominantly in Humboldt, Mendocino, Shasta, and Trinity counties.

BLM's rule of thumb is that every \$1 million spent on ecosystem restoration produces 25 jobs.

Contact: Bob Rheiner, BLM, @ (503) 952-6015.

